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Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

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XMB-02 OPIC-03 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 STR-04

CEA-01 /098 W
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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2686
INFO AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMCONGEN HONG KONG
USLO PEKING
/CINCPAC HONOLULU HAWAII

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 11704

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, JA
SUBJ: EXTRAORDINARY DIET SESSION AND UNLIKELIHOOD OF NEAR-TERM DISSOLUTION

SUMMARY. ALTHOUGH THERE HAVE BEEN NO FINAL DECISIONS, IT NOW SEEMS ALMOST CERTAIN THAT THE OPENING OF THE SPECIAL DIET SESSION WILL BE DELAYED UNTIL MID- OR LATE SEPTEMBER. AND THEN THERE WILL BE LITTLE OPPOSITION PARTY SUPPORT FOR LDP PROPOSALS, EXCEPT FOR ANTI-RECESSIONARY MEASURES. AS A CONSEQUENCE, NON-REVENUE BILLS WHICH WOULD GENERATE CONTROVERSY, SUCH AS THE NPT AND ANTI-MONOPOLY LAW REVISIONS, ARE UNLIKELY TO BETAKEN UP. FINALLY, WHILE MANY HERE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THERE WILL BE A DISSOLUTION AND GENERAL ELECTION BEFORE YEAR-END, WE ARE NOW PERSUADED THIS IS UNLIKELY. END SUMMARY.

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1. ALTHOUGH NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE LDP AND OPPOSITION PARTIES ON THE OPENING DATE AND DURATION OF THE UPCOMING DIET SESSION HAVE NOT YET FORMALLY BEGUN--AND DECISIONS ARE NOT EXPECTED UNTIL LATE AUGUST--IT ALREADY APPEARS CERTAIN THE DIET WILL NOT OPEN IN EARLY

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SEPTEMBER AS RECOMMENDED BY THE LDP. BOTH PRIMIN MIKI AND LDP SECGEN NAKASONE HAVE MADE IT CLEAR THEY HAVE NOT ABANDONED THE LDP PROPOSAL OF HOLDING A SIXTY DAY EXTRAORDINARY DIET SESSION FROM SEPTEMBER 5, BUT BOTH HAVE ALSO ADMITTED THE DIET OPENING IS LIKELY TO BE DELAYED UNTIL MID-SEPTEMBER OR EVEN LATER IN THE MONTH. TO IMPROVE PROSPECTS FOR LDP UNITY IN THE FACE OF AN EXPECTED STIFF OPPOSITION PARTY CHALLENGE, THERE ALSO APPEARS TO BE AN EMERGING CONSENSUS WITHIN THE LDP THAT ONLY ESSENTIAL BUDGET AND REVENUE BILLS WILL BE TAKEN UP AND THAT "CONTROVERSIAL" NON-FINANCIAL BILLS WILL NOT BE INTRODUCED.

2. OPPOSITION PARTY RESISTANCE NOW APPEARS CERTAIN. AS A RESULT OF SEPARATE MEETINGS AUGUST 20 BETWEEN THE JSP-KOMEITO AND JSP-DSP POLICY COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN, THE JSP, KOMEITO AND DSP HAVE AGREED TO REESTABLISH A "JOINT DIET STRUGGLE" GROUPING. THE THREE PARTIES HAVE AGREED TO THE FOLLOWING "JOINT STRUGGLE" OBJECTIVES: (A) DEMAND TOP PRIORITY FOR ANTI-RECESSION MEASURES; (B) PREVENT THE INTRODUCTION OF BILLS TO INCREASE TABACCO AND LIQUOR PRICES; (C) PUSH FOR REINTRO-DUCTION OF THE ANTI-MONOPOLY LAW REVISIONS; (D) PRESS MIKI FOR EX-PLANATION OF THE "STRENGTHENING" OF THE US-JAPAN SECURITY ARRANGEMENT
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AS A RESULT OF THE US-JAPAN SUMMIT MEETING, ETC. THE JSP AND KOMEITO AGREED ON AN ADDITIONAL OBJECTIVE--TO SEEK TO TOPPLE THE MII CABINET, BUT THE DSP STOPPED SHORT, INSISTING THIS SHOULD BECOME AN OBJECTIVE ONLY IF MIKI FAILED TO RESPOND TO THE OTHER DEMANDS. DESPITE JSP OVERTURES, IT SEEMS VERY LIKELY THE JCP WILL BE LEFT OUT OF THE "JOINT STRUGGLE" AND WILL OPPOSE LDP PROPOSALS INDEPENDENTLY.

3. INEXTRICABLY INTERWOVEN WITH THE DIET SESSION ITSELF IS THE POSSIBILITY OF DISSOLUTION--AND A GENERAL ELECTION. BOTH ARE EXPECTED IN LATE 1975. AN IMPRESSIVE ARRAY OF LDP LEADERS, HOWEVER, ARE NOW ON PUBLIC RECORD AS OPPOSING DISSOLUTION THIS YEAR: MIKI (THREE TIMES), FUKUDA, TANAKA, AND SHIINA. IN ADDITION, LDP SEC-GEN NAKASONE HAS TOLD EMBOFFS PRIVATELY THERE WILL BE NO DISSOLUTION THIS YEAR, AND THERE IS NO INDICATION THAT OHIRA WANTS DISSOLUTION. THERE ARE THOSE WHO DO, HOWEVER. THESE INCLUDE YOUNGER LDP MEMBERS
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AND OPPOSITION PARTY MEMBERS WHO HAVE ALREADY INVESTED A GOOD DEAL OF MONEY AND EFFORT IN THEIR ELECTORAL DISTRICTS DURING THE JULY-AUGUST DIET INTERIM. THE MEDIA, TOO, CONTINUES TO EMPHASIZE THE PROBABILITY OF LATE YEAR DISSOLUTION.

4. COMMENT. DELAYED OPENING OF THE DIET IS NOT UNEXPECTED. THE EARLY OPENING DATE (SEPTEMBER 5) AND THE LONG DURATION (60 DAYS) WERE CONSIDERED FROM THE START TO BE ESSENTIALLY LDP BARGAINING POSITIONS AIMED AT ACHIEVING OPPOSITION PARTY AGREEMENT TO OPEN SOMEWHAT LATER FOR A SHORTER PERIOD. THAT SCENARIO IS NOW IN PROGRESS BUT WE WILL NOT KNOW FOR ANOTHER WEEK OR TWO PRECISELY WHEN THE DIET WILL OPEN OR ITS EXTENT. WE AGREE IT IS UNLIKELY, HOWEVER, THAT THE SESSION WILL BEGIN BEFORE THE LATTER PART OF SEPTEMBER.

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5. THE VIRTUALLY CERTAIN INTRANSIGENCE OF OPPOSITION PARTIES ON REVENUE BILLS WHICH THE LDP LEADERSHIP--AND PARTICULARLY FINMIN OHIRA--CONSIDER ESSENTIAL, MAKE LDP UNITY UNUSUALLY IMPORTANT IN THE UPCOMING DIET SESSION. THUS WE EXPECT CONSIDERABLE RELUCTANCE TO INTRODUCE CONTROVERSIAL BILLS, SUCH AS NPT RATIFICATION AND ANTI-MONOPLY LAW REVISONS.

6. THE "ELECTION MOOD" IN JAPAN HAS NOT YET ACHIEVED A CRITICAL MASS, BUT IT HAS REACHED IMPRESSIVE PROPORTIONS. THE LDP LEADERSHIP, HOWEVER, NO LONGER FAVORS A LATE YEAR GENERAL ELECTION BECAUSE IT WOULD ENCOURAGE LDP DIET DISUNITY, BECAUSE THERE IS STILL A SHORTAGE O F ELECTION FUNDS, AND BECAUSE POLITICIANS NO LONGER EXPECT YEAR-END ECONOMIC CONDITIONS TO BE FAVORABLE. A VARIETY OF PARTISAN TACTICAL REASONS ARE ALSO INVOLVED. THIS FACES THE LDP LEADERSHIP WITH A SERIOUS PROBLEM: HOW TO DEFUSE THE "ELECTION MOOD" WITHOUT AN ELECTION. ONE POSSIBILITY WE ARE LIKELY TO HEAR MORE OF IS A MODERATE CABINET SHUFFLE IN NOVEMBER OR DECEMBER. THE GOAL WOULD BE TO GIVE THE APPEARANCE OF IMPORTANT CHANGE, WHILE MAIN-TAINING THE PRESENT DELICATE FACTIONAL BLANCE. GIVEN PRESENT FACTIONAL STRAINS, THIS COULD BE A SENSITIVE OPERATION. BUT ASIDE FRO
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THE OBVOUS RISKS INVOLVED, IT DOES NOT APPEAR TO AUGER ANY SPECIAL DANGER FOR PRIMIN MIKI'S OWN POSITION. THE INTRA-PARTY STANDOFF WHICH BROUGHT HIM TO POWER AND THE WILLINGNESS OF KEY FACTIONS (MIKI, FUKUDA, NAKASONE) TO SUPPORT HIM IN POWER CONTINUE BASICALLY UNC-HANGED.
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